

September 16, 2009

WASHINGTON, DC - In response to an increase in confirmed cases of the H1N1 Virus across Upstate New York, especially in colleges and universities, U.S. Rep. Michael Arcuri (NY-24) has offered state and federal resources to concerned constituents across the district to fight the spread of H1N1.

"The spread of the H1N1 Virus is a growing concern across the country," **Arcuri said**, "The number of confirmed cases in Upstate New York, especially in our colleges and universities, has risen over the past month and I am advocating that every member of our community use caution when they become sick and take advantage of state and federal resources to prevent the spread of this virus."

During the week of August 30-September 5, 2009, a review of the key indicators by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) found that influenza activity increased in the United States compared to the prior weeks. Visits to doctors for influenza-like illness (ILI) are increasing nationally. Visits to doctors for influenza-like illness are higher than what is expected during this time of year and have increased over the last four weeks. Due to these factors and the timing of school and college openings there is heightened concern regarding the spread of H1N1.

The CDC has released tips on how to prevent the spread of Swine Flu and likens the suggested precautions to those taken during a typical flu season. Taking simple precautions can stop the spread of this virus. Below are the recommendations from the CDC:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.

- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.

- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.

- If you are sick with flu-like illness, CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.) and keep away from others as much as possible to keep from making others sick.

- Follow public health advice regarding school closures, avoiding crowds and other social distancing measures.

- Be prepared in case you get sick and need to stay home for a week or so; a supply of over-the-counter medicines, alcohol-based hand rubs, tissues and other related items might could be useful and help avoid the need to make trips out in public while you are sick and contagious

People at high risk for flu complications who become ill with H1N1 should speak with their health care provider as soon as possible. Early treatment with antiviral medications may be recommended to help prevent hospitalizations and deaths.

Groups that are at higher risk of complications from flu if they get sick include:

- children younger than age 5;

- people age 65 or older;

- pregnant women;

- adults and children who have asthma, other chronic pulmonary, cardiovascular, hepatic,

hematological, neurologic, neuromuscular, or metabolic disorders such as diabetes;

Concerned constituents can visit Arcuri's website: www.arcuri.house.gov or call his district office at 1-800-235-2525 (toll-free in NYS) for more information. The New York State Department of Health has set up a hotline for H1N1 concerns at 1-800-808-1987.

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